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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/816,721	04/02/2004	Thomas C. Dickey	MCC 01310 CIUS	1013
32233	7590	02/14/2008		
STORM LLP BANK OF AMERICA PLAZA 901 MAIN STREET, SUITE 7100 DALLAS, TX 75202			EXAMINER FRIDIE JR, WILLMON	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3722	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			02/14/2008	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/816,721

Applicant(s)

DICKEY, THOMAS C.

Examiner

Willmon Fridie

Art Unit

3722

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 May 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 8, 10, 11 and 14-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 8, 10, 11, 14-23, 25 and 26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 24 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Art Unit: 3722

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

Claims 8,10 and 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, it is unclear as to what "central axis" applicant is referring to. Is it the axis of the "adjustment mechanism" and the "means for adjustment".

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 8,10, 14,15,17,18,19,23,25 and 26 as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stroobants et al. ('050).

Stroobants et al. discloses all of the subject matter set forth in the claims including first and second blades (176,178), adjustment mechanism (198), motion translator (230), housing (160), and power tang connection (192).

Stroobants et al. discloses at column 7, lines 20-33:

*Rotary drive for rotating the blades 176 and 178 respectively about the axes of shafts 172 and 182 is provided by the male drive element 192 which is matingly received in the female drive socket 104 on the end of cutter drive shaft 102 which is driven by gear 98 as previously discussed. Consequently,*

Art Unit: 3722

*the axially fixed rotary cutter shaft 172 is rotated about its own axis and pinion 190 thereon is meshed with a similar pinion 238 on the shaft 182 to provide rotary drive for shaft 182. It should be observed that the pinions 190 and 238 are always in mesh for all positions of the swingable shaft 182 so that the knife elements 176 and 178 are continuously driven in opposite directions.*

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 11,16 and 20-22 as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stroobants et al.

In regard to claims 11 and 20-22, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the claimed gap ranges, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art,

Art Unit: 3722

discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

With respect to claim 16, the use of spur gears would have been an obvious mechanical design expedient to a skilled artisan absent any showing of criticality.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claim 24 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 5/21/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The examiner submits that Stroobants et al. discloses all of the elements set forth in the independent claims and is clearly analogous art and it is noted that some of the features upon which applicant relies are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Further, it is not clear as to what "central axis" applicant is referring to. This raises a question under 35 USC 103.

Also in reviewing the claims as best understood, the examiner submits that the motion of Stroobants et. al. does effect change of the gap. In view of the breadth of the independent claims, it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in

Art Unit: 3722

which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations.

*Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ 1647 (1987).

### ***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Willmon Fridle whose telephone number is 571 272 4476. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, MONICA CARTER can be reached on 571 272 4475. The fax phone

Art Unit: 3722

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

wf

  
WILLMON FRIDIE, JR.  
PRIMARY EXAMINER